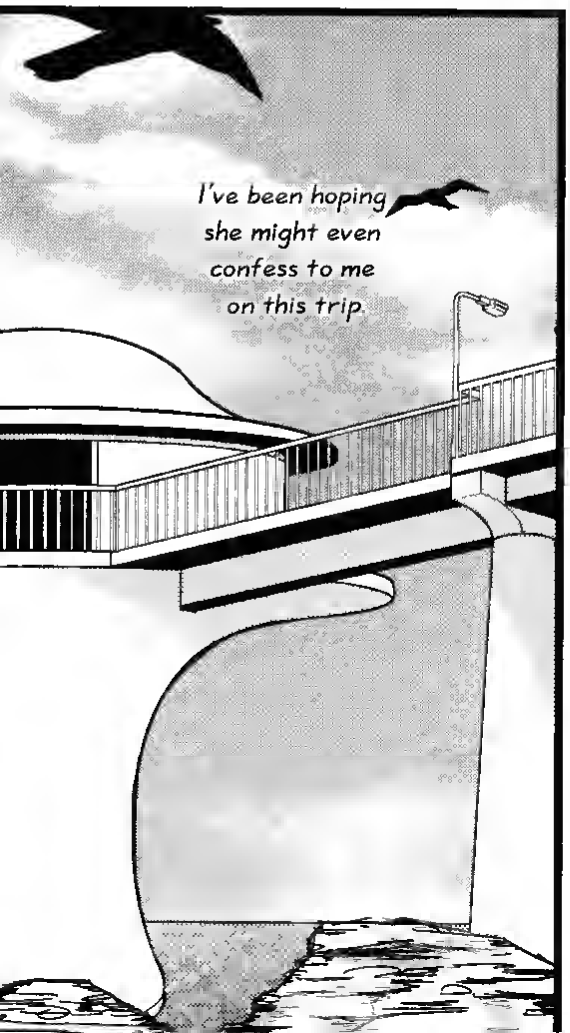
Such a pest!
Didn't I tell you to get away from us?
shoo! shoo!
Tch!
Don't get so full of yourself
Ugly bitch
Come on, Itsuki~
If they get pissed at us from you talking like that, what'll we do?
What'd he call me?!
With assholes like those guys, if you act polite they'll just get super pushy.
You've gotta smack them down.

MORATORIUM:
LATTER PART

My job search hasn't been making any progress... But here I am, on a graduation trip with Itsuki.
I'll just become a *freeter, I've had enough.
Ehe
Sees her as a pitiful child.
.....
Then let's just go now.
*note- A freeter is someone who doesn't find a permanent full-time position, and is either underemployed in a part-time job or unemployed
SLAM
From the trip preparations to the driving, Itsuki took care of everything.
I can always count on her.
That's my Itsuki.

300 yen
330 Yen
Pickled-plum Soft-Serve Ice Cream 400 Yen
Pickled-plum soft serve...?
Ah!
I heard that's a regional specialty! Let's eat some~
お土産
梅干ソフト
Itsuki, Ituski!
.....
Ready? Aaawn~ ♥

Chomp


I've been hoping she might even confess to me on this trip.

Ah,
let's go check that out. The lookout.

Yummy?
Hmmm. It's okay.
Chew Chew

It's been three years since I first noticed Itsuki's feelings for me.
.....

When Spring arrives,
we will graduate and the time will come for us to set out on separate paths.
Once she finally osks me out, I'll have to deol with the question of whether to accept or not, but...
I've decided not to dwell on thot part.
The way we live now, we can meet almost every day
But once we graduate, that's unlikely to continue
Itsuki could interpret it optimistically and get her hopes up,
but still, It should be fine to just give her an ambiguous reply, right?
The Worst
I'm sure Itsuki will get to know lots of people at her new workplace as well.
Moreover, even if she loves me now, there's no guarantee she will in the future

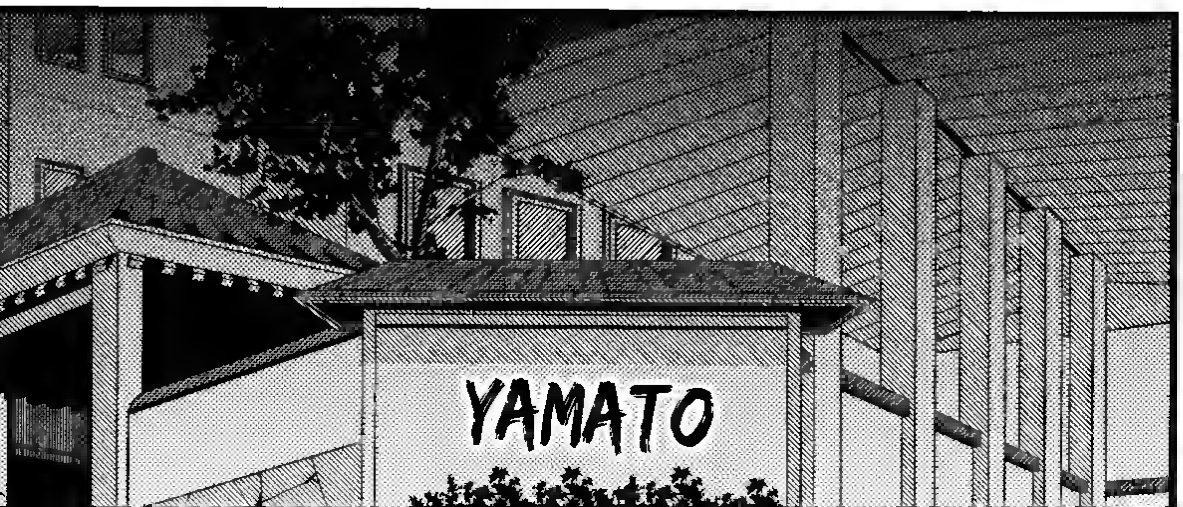
Chatting and relaxing in Itsuki's one-room oportment.

going to the corner store together lote ot night.

oll I wanted wos for that kind of life to continue forever.

I don't want to graduate at all.

I wish we could stay as we were.



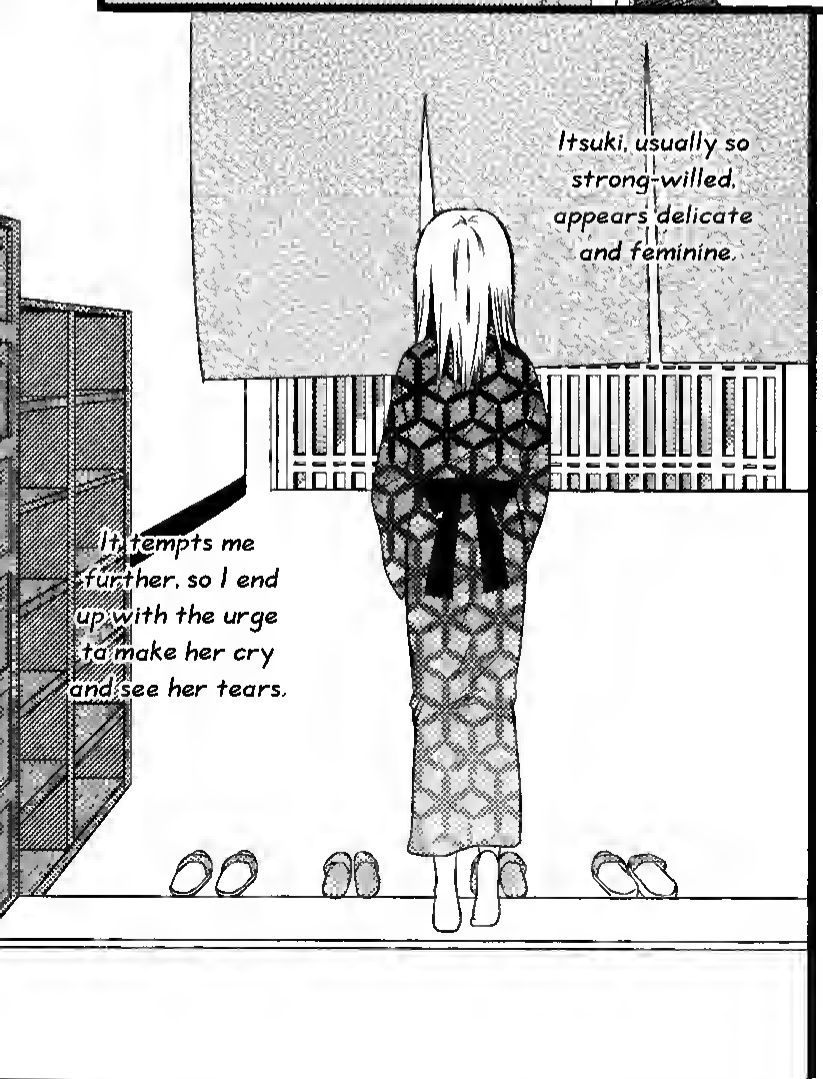
Hooray! Hot springs, hot srings! ♥
Itsuki, over here!
FLASH
I'm naked! ♥

Retrieving memory
.....
Ah.
A while back, you got all embarrassed when I came out of the bath naked, so....
I was hoping I'd get to see you blush again.
♥
What are you doing?
Pervert.
Eeh~
Rattle
I was just thinking "What the fuck," since people don't normally wander around bare naked.
I wasn't embarrased about that,
I was hoping she'd react more. I keep trying different ways to provoke her, but she's unexpectedly composed...
How irritating.
Aah~
That was a nice bath!

Clumsy
Clumsy
?
Ah—
Itsuki,
you've got it all wrong.
?
It folds the other way.
GR
AB

This side goes under.
C'mon Itsuki, even though you're so talented, some parts of you are surprisingly childish, you know?
Swish
Have you never worn a yukata--

It's like she thought I was stripping her to do something dirty...
This is a bit...
Her reaction...
Pull
Loosen
Pat
There, all done.
Th—
Thank... you...


Itsuki, usually so strong-willed, appears delicate and feminine.
It tempts me further, so I end up with the urge to make her cry and see her tears.

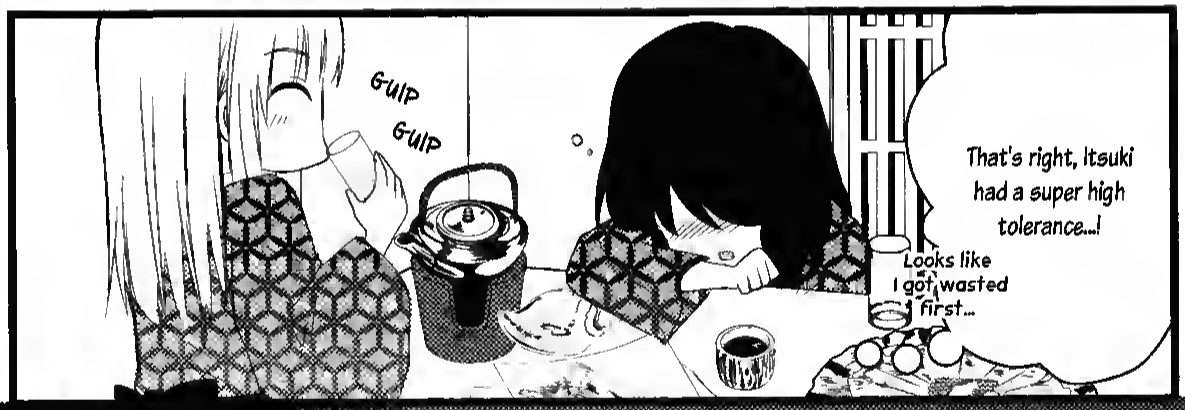
However,

when I think about the seemingly invulnerable Itsuki going weak in the knees because of me,

my spine tingles with pleasure.

Let's eat!
Dinner looks tasty~♪
Even I can tell what a despicable woman I am
I wonder how I can catch her off guard again....
How annoying.
She recovers fast...
Even though she was shaking like that!

Itsuki, let's drink!
The power of alcohol!
Oh, thanks.


Gulp Gulp
That's right, Itsuki had a super high tolerance...!
Looks like I got wasted first...

Mao, move!
YAMATO

Come on, you drank too much!
I wanna chat~
Wait!
I don't wanna sleep yet!
She's completely smashed!
Come sleep in your futon!
Drag
Drag
Hey, hey~
Ituski!
Itsuki, Itsuki!!
I'm here.
What? Come on,
you don't need to yell, I can hear you.
Ituski...

Is there someone...
you like?
Influenced by the alcohol.
I ran out of patience and brought up the topic bluntly.

Yeah, on your middle school class trip.
On an overnight trip, this kind of talk is a must.
That... came out of nowhere.
Hey, you like someone, don't you?
while I stubbornly insisted, the longing must have shown on my face.
And just like that.
I do.

I like someone.
I do.
Eh?
THUD
THUD
when I was shown just this glimpse, I completely lost my nerve.
Even though I was trying to drag the whole thing out of her

So it was true...
You...
I had no idea.
I wonder why my heart wavers.
I want to know Itsuki's true thoughts.
However,
even if I confronted her directly, I have a feeling it would only make things difficult for me.
Of course you didn't know.
I was hiding it.
...What about a confession?
Are you going to tell how you feel?
Hmmm, I don't think I will.

Why...
you don't know that...
I'm just a friend in their eyes.
When I look, I understand.
After all, I've got zero chance.
But...
friendship can also grow into love...
It won't.

Is Itsuki trying to give up on me?
YAMA
I felt a sudden dread
How can you be so certain.
How?
I also wonder how.
But still, I know.
.....

Eh?
And you, Mao?
Aren't you trying to find a boyfriend?
.....
For some reason...

These days I'm not really interested.
!!
I guess it's because I'm having too much fun spending time with you.
I'm a coward.

There's no way I could tell her something like that.
Even though I myself am not in love with her,
even though I won't commit to answering her,
I still want Itsuki to continue to love me because of my childish desire to monopolize her
Despite pushing Itsuki to open up like that,
this is the closest I can come to telling her my own feelings
...I see.

You're wrong.
I definitely won't ever get a boyfriend.
Well then, until you get a boyfriend, I'll keep you company.
That'll never happen.
...And if I'm single for the rest of my life?
Fu fu
What? You're being ridiculous.

As long as it's just for sex, it'd be simpler to hook up with guys like those skirt-chasers anyways.
Still,
I haven't liked any of my past boyfriends, much less the playboys, as much as I like Itsuki.
I like her most of all.
And I'm certain that no one I meet from now on will be as dear to me as she is.
It's true I can't respond to Itsuki with the same kind of desire she has for me.
but even so, there's no one I like more than Itsuki.

Hoping to convey just that feeling,
I firmly grasped her hand in mine.

Snap
Swish
Tug
Well then, I'm headed to an interview. I'll be back.

Why'd you suddenly decide to get serious about your job search again?
Ehehe. Might as well, right?
I guess that's fine,
but it's a good opportunity, y'know,
so keep trying your hardest.
I will.
tap
tap

There's one thing I've determined.
I will offer to share an apartment with Itsuki.
I'll diligently seek employment,
and once I land a position with enough of an income for me to pay half the rent.

This may be unfair when Itsuki is trying to let go of me.
But I have absolutely no interest in lettting go of Itsuki.
Sneak
And I always put my own desires first

You know, Ituski...
you and me.
we'll always be together, understand?
RENTAL LISTING
HERE'S TO YOUR NEW LIFE!
fin.

Cocytus
chapter 4

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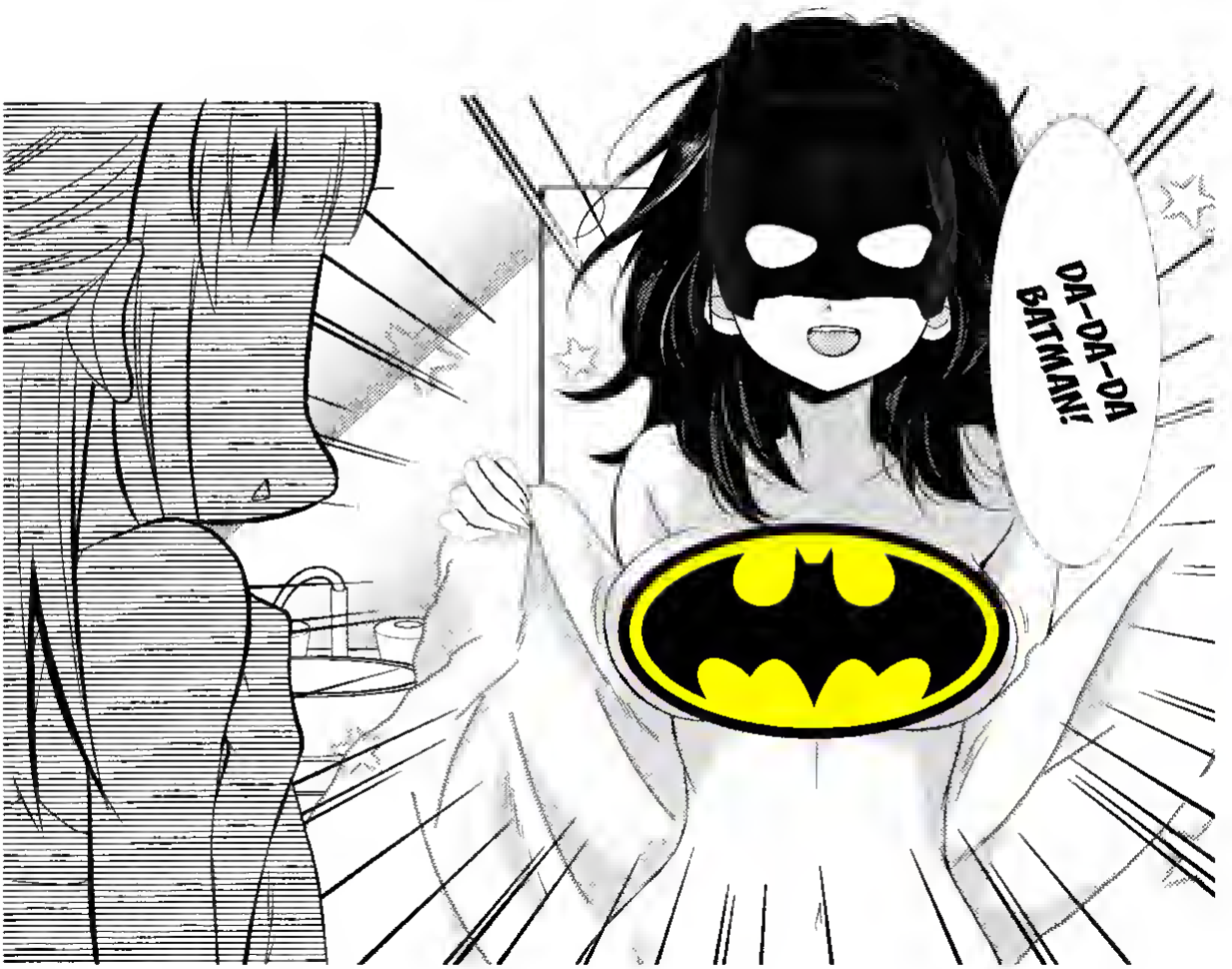

COCYTUS CHAPTER 4
MORATORIUM: LATTER PART
KODAMA NAOKA